Kennerly, Charles Odell

Methodism in Guilford County

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# METHODISM

IN

# GUILFORD COUNTY

1776-1965

*By*

CHARLES ODELL KENNERLY

A

MINISTER

IN

THE WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE

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THE METHODIST CHURCH

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## THE INTRODUCTION

Some five years ago, I was asked to write a history of Pleasant Garden Methodist Church. I assumed that it could be done in a short time. But when I got into the church's long history, I found that it must be written in relationship to the Guilford Circuit and even the Greensboro District. The economic conditions are reflected in the financial reports of the churches and circuits.

In my search for materials, it became necessary to examine many Annual Conference Journals and Quarterly Conference Records and to read many books on Methodism.

I am greatly indebted to these young women of the church—they are direct descendants of these early church fathers—for their assistance in this work:

To Miss Martha Ross Kirkman who helped prepare the chronological roll of ministers and for the sorting of materials in the Duke Library.

To Miss Rosa Neelley who examined old deeds in the Register of Deeds' Office and for locating the Daniel Sherwood home-place.

To Miss Barbara Ross for the research on Bishop Francis Asbury and early Methodism. Also, for preparing the Historical Pageant of 175 years of Methodism, and for the many suggestions and corrections she made on the manuscript.

This has been a labor of love. My appreciation of the early Church Fathers and the Circuit Riders has deepened my consecration and given me faith to proclaim, "Jesus is Lord."

Your servant in Christ,

C. O. KENNERLY

Pleasant Garden, N. C.
March 21, 1967

## METHODISM IN GUILFORD COUNTY

### 1776 - 1884

About the middle of the 18th century, settlers began to move into Piedmont North Carolina. Most of these settlers were Scotch-Irish and Germans from Pennsylvania and Maryland. They came down the Wagon Road and settled in the Yadkin River Valley, where they established homes and churches of Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Quaker faiths.

Methodism began as a spiritual movement within the Church of England in 1729. Its purpose was not to establish a new doctrine or a new church, but to seek after and find a new life, and to get others to do the same. Methodism began in America in 1766 when Philip Embury began preaching in New York and Robert Strawbridge in Maryland. The society of New York appealed to Mr. Wesley to send them a preacher and at the next Conference in England he called for volunteers for America. Richard Broadman and Joseph Pilmoor offered themselves for this service and they were accepted and sent to America. They landed in Philadelphia on October 24, 1769, and soon Mr. Pilmoor started south, preaching through Maryland, Virginia, and into North Carolina. "On the 28th of September, 1772," writes Mr. Pilmoor, "I reached Currituck Courthouse a little before noon. I began without delay and declared to churchmen, Baptists and Presbyterians, 'He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.' God made his Word like a hammer that breaketh the rock to pieces. The poor people expressed the utmost gratitude, and Colonel Williams invited me to dine. I gladly accepted the offer." The honor of preaching the first Methodist sermon in the state belongs to Pilmoor and the honor of being the first layman to open his home to the Methodist preacher belongs to Colonel Williams.

Methodism did not officially come into the state until 1776 when the Carolina Circuit was set up with Edward Dromgoole, Francis Poythress, and Isham Tatum as preachers, This circuit already had six hundred and eighty-three members in the societies. Their field of labor was unlimited and many think they preached all the way to the Blue Ridge and back that year. Many people looked with suspicion on the Methodist preacher after Mr. Wesley urged the colo-

nies to remain loyal to the Crown, yet the circuit reported nine hundred and thirty members in the societies that year.

In 1778 the North Carolina Circuit was divided into three circuits: the Roanoke, Tar River, and New Hope. William Glendenning, Andrew Yeagan, and Philip Bruce were appointed to the New Hope Circuit. This new circuit embraced Guilford County and all the territory west to the mountains.

Methodism was having a period of great growth in the Piedmont area, so in 1783 the Guilford Circuit was formed principally from the New Hope Circuit with three hundred and fourteen members. Samuel Dudley and James Gibbons were the preachers. There were no organized Methodist churches at that time, so the preaching was in the homes of the society members and at cross-road arbors. The next ten years Methodism was busy organizing the members into classes with leaders who instructed them in ways of holy living and prepared the probationers for church membership.

In the beginning, Mr. Wesley had no idea of organizing a separate church. But circumstances forced this upon him for the Methodist ministers could not baptize, neither administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The established Church of England in America refused to administer these sacraments to the Methodist, so the members were without these means of grace. A Methodist Conference was called to meet on December 24, 1784, in Lovely Lane Church in Baltimore. There were some sixty ministers present. Mr. Wesley sent Francis Asbury to America to represent him and to preside over the conference. These ministers organized themselves into the Methodist Episcopal Church with two orders in the ministers, namely, deacon and elder. The preachers present were ordained deacon or elder, according to the years served in the ministry. This conference is regarded as the most important one in Methodism.

The first General Conference met in Baltimore November 1, 1792. There was much discussion over the power of the bishop and the method of appointing the preachers. James O'Kelly led the opposition and, after much debate, the motion was defeated and the episcopacy was saved. The next day Mr. O'Kelly with some of his preacher followers left the conference and the church.

A preacher, previous to this General Conference of 1792, was paid $64.00 a year. This conference allowed travel expenses and provisions for himself and horses while on the road. Another rule change was made allowing the preacher to receive money for performing a marriage ceremony, but to make no charge. He also was

forbidden to receive anything for administering the ordinance of baptism or for burying the dead.

North Carolina Methodism in 1783 numbered six thousand three hundred and sixty-three members. There are no Quarterly Conference minutes until 1832, where we find this record of one held at Muir's Chapel. These nineteen churches made this quarterly financial report:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Greensboro | $3.75 | Field's | 00 |
| Bethlehem | 1.40 | New Hope | .81¼ |
| Pleasant Garden | 1.05 | Bethel | 00 |
| Rehobeth | 1.37½ | Mt. Zion | 2.12½ |
| Shilo | 00 | Gethsemane | 1.45 |
| Prospect | 1.30 | Fair Field | 1.00 |
| Centre | 3.61¼ | Lees Chapel | 1.22 |
| Mt. Pleasant | 00 | Goshen | 2.10 |
| Fair Grove | 3.00 | Muirs Chapel | 4.00 |
| Zion | 00 | | |

The pastor's salary, bishops, presiding elder, and missions were paid out of this quarterly total of $27.14½.

In 1883 these churches appear on the Guilford Circuit: Rockingham Courthouse, Jamestown, Sandy Ridge, Smith's, Carmel, Lowe's, and Salem. In 1884 Wentworth, Harmony Grove, Liberty, Holt's Chapel, and Black Jack (later becoming Shady Grove).

Methodism continued its growth in Guilford until the circuit was divided in 1861 into the Guilford and the South Guilford Circuits. The Guilford Circuit was composed of all the churches in the northern part of the county and the churches in Rockingham. The South Guilford Circuit was composed of the churches in the southern part of the county and in Randolph County. Some fourteen years later in 1875 they were again divided into three circuits, adding the Pleasant Garden Circuit. This new circuit was composed of ten churches, with six hundred and twenty-five members. It is difficult to know which churches were on these different circuits, for they held their Quarterly Conference together. The existing records do not show individual reports as to number of members or of finances.

The North Carolina Conference was formed in 1836 from the Virginia Conference and included all of North Carolina from the coast to the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. At this conference the Greensboro District was set up principally from the Yadkin District and included Guilford, Rockingham, Stokes, Forsyth, Davidson and Randolph Counties. Taking the centenary year of Methodism (1884) as an example, we find many interesting items of growth

during the forty-eight years of work in this district. Let us remember that some of these circuits embraced all the churches and preaching places in a county. All of the churches were small in membership and often situated miles apart. The following is the Annual Conference Report for the year 1884:

| Charge | No. Churches | No. Members | Salary | No. Sunday Schools | No. Scholars | Pastor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Greensboro Sta. | 1 | 415 | 1200 | 3 | 349 | L. W. Crawford |
| Guilford Ct. | 7 | 696 | 600 | 6 | 375 | T. H. Pegram |
| East Guilford Ct. | 3 | 265 | 350 | 2 | 155 | J. A. Bowles |
| Pleasant Garden | 6 | 445 | 264 | 6 | 529 | John Tillett—C. W. King |
| Franklin Ct. | 7 | 282 | 274 | 4 | 170 | R. T. Stephenson |
| Randleman Sta. | 2 | 309 | 700 | 2 | 320 | R. F. Bumpass |
| Randolph Ct. | 11 | 742 | 526 | 10 | 400 | |
| Trinity College | 1 | 105 | 150 | 1 | 116 | J. F. Heitman |
| Thomasville-High Point | 2 | 301 | 480 | 2 | 239 | S. V. Hoyle |
| Davidson Miss. | 2 | 95 | 00 | 4 | 140 | D. L. Earnhardt |
| Winston Sta. | 2 | 424 | 1760 | 2 | 197 | J. T. Bagwell |
| Forsyth Ct. | 11 | 762 | 448 | 10 | 597 | S. H. Helsebeck |
| Stokes Ct. | 10 | 692 | 00 | 8 | 450 | J. R. Scroggs |
| Snow Creek Miss. | 1 | 59 | 58 | 1 | 85 | S. D. Peeler |
| Madison Ct. | 6 | 427 | 600 | 6 | 300 | R. P. Troy |
| Dan River Miss. | 1 | 31 | 00 | 2 | 49 | |
| Ruffin Ct. | 4 | 455 | 625 | 4 | 215 | N. E. Coltrane |
| Reidsville Ct. | 3 | 450 | 700 | 3 | 240 | D. R. Bruton |
| Kernersville Ct. | 7 | 381 | 300 | 4 | 262 | J. C. Thomas—M. J. Hunt |

While Methodism was making this impact upon the life of this area, it was being multiplied across the Blue Ridge into Tennessee and Kentucky. If there is a secret for this success it is found in these words: "The church was growing because men were giving their lives upon her altar."

If a summary is possible for the first one hundred years of Methodism in the greater Guilford area, it would show many small churches organized and preaching places established in most of the settlements and at the crossroads. The number of Conference preachers had increased with the local preachers; most of these preaching places were regularly supplied. These men were faithful and many members were enrolled in the churches. The Sunday schools had made little progress in teaching children and adults. The circuits were large, some having eleven churches and often

embracing a whole county. This made it very difficult for the preacher to reach them more than a dozen or more times a year. Some of these small congregations at the crossroads did not survive, but the founding fathers were trying to meet the spiritual needs of these people who lived in small, isolated communities and separated by long, muddy trails. Only God can write what these early itinerant Methodist preachers accomplished.

### The Annual Conferences

The first Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church convened at Green Hill's, near Louisburg, on April 20, 1785. The area represented Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. About twenty preachers were present and guests of Green Hill and they slept on pallets placed upon the floor. (Some two years later, when the Conference again met there, the preachers were entertained in the homes of friends in the community.) These men had come from hard places and had endured many hardships, but they reported a gain of nine hundred ninety-nine members for the year. Bishop Asbury presided over this Conference and among the many important things accomplished was the grouping of the circuits into districts with an elder in charge. The name "Presiding Elder" came four years later. James O'Kelly was appointed to the Yadkin District, but it was not until 1788 that we find the charges composing it. They were: Roanoke, Caswell, New Hope, Guilford, Salisbury, Yadkin, and Halifax. This Yadkin District embraced as much territory as the present North Carolina Conference. The Annual Conference has undergone many changes since that first one, but basically, it is the annual agthering of ministers and representatives from the local charges and who transact the business of the Conference and to receive the appointments of the preachers for another year.

### The Quarterly Conferences

The Quarterly Conference is an important part of Methodism. In early Methodism, it was primarily a religious gathering for the circuit or circuits of an area and it was well attended by both preachers and laymen. Only a few questions were asked and answered. The conference always lasted two days—Saturday and Sunday. The preachers were entertained in the homes of the host church and they often preached in them on Saturday night. All the traveling preachers were present and often preached one after another during the Saturday session. The love feast was an important part of this

conference. Then on Sunday the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was observed and administered by the Presiding Elder. Many who attended these services traveled twenty or thirty miles to attend these conferences. Often many conversions were reported from these services and it was a time of spiritual refreshing for all.

### The Class Meetings

The class meeting was another important part of early Methodism. The people lived in widely-scattered areas and the preachers were few in number, which made oversight of its members very difficult or next to impossible. So the members and new converts were organized into classes under a class leader who stood in the place of the preacher. These classes met every week in the homes of the members as a group for worship and study, then they separated into small groups of men and women where the leader questioned them about their spiritual life and growth. Each member was asked to contribute a penny a week to the general fund of the society which some thought was asking too much. The class meeting became the germ of thousands of Methodist churches. In addition to this, these classes became training classes for the new converts in membership. Each one was on a six-months probation and they must have the recommendation of the class leader before they could be received into full membership.

### The Period of the Revival

The revival in North Carolina began near the close of the 18th century. Bishop Asbury was the leader of this movement. Around him was a ministry composed mostly of young men of apostolic spirit and character. They had only one passion—to win souls for Christ. The doctrines preached were thoroughly Methodistic: free salvation, full salvation, present salvation; justification by faith; regeneration of the heart by the Holy Spirit; knowledge of sins forgiven and the witness of the Holy Spirit that the believer is born of God. The revival was not confined to the Methodist church, but it was supported by Presbyterians and some Baptists.

Out of the revival came the camp meetings. The first one was organized and directed by Dr. David Caldwell, pastor of Buffalo Presbyterian Church near Greensboro and it was held at Old Union Methodist Church, located a few miles south of the Guilford line in Randolph County in the summer of 1801. It is assumed that Old

Union was a part of the Guilford Circuit and thus the first camp meeting was held within its boundaries. Men under conviction were often struck down and greatly exercised in mind and body. These physical exercises were known as "the jerks" and no doubt but that they were the result of a psychological emotional experience. When Enoch George was pastor of the Guilford Circuit in 1792 he became very much disgusted with the "jerks" and preached against such emotional outbursts.

Most of these meetings were held out of doors and under brush arbors at the crossroads and in the churches where they were established. Families came in wagons and camped during this period, and later individuals built cabins or tents around the camp area. We know there were camp grounds at Centre, Rehobeth, Muir's Chapel, and Pleasant Garden. In 1854 Bethlehem erected a camp arbor which was used each year for its August revival. We know from records that Pleasant Garden in 1840 had a camp ground and six tents and that it was used until after the turn of the century.

We have some reference to this camp meeting at Pleasant Garden in the Reverend W. C. Gammon's autobiography. He says that he "was born in Guilford County on January 19, 1828, and that he was converted at a camp meeting at Pleasant Garden in the year 1849." Then the Guilford Circuit meeting on April 2, 1871, unanimously selected Pleasant Garden as the place to hold the annual district camp meeting. There is no record of this meeting being held or what the attendance and results were, or who were the camp meeting preachers.

Whatever our thoughts are today about these meetings, nothing could have taken their place when Methodism was striving to minister to the spiritual and social needs of people who lived in that period. During this time thousands were brought into church membership. So like many institutions and movements, the camp meeting served well its generation and then ceased to exist, but its influence is felt even today in church circles.

These services were not always of a solemn nature. Amusing things often happened at these meetings. The Reverend Jesse Lee tells about a sermon preached by a Baptist minister at a camp meeting near here. He writes, "He preached a 'powerful sermon' on the subject of immersion, using an outline something like this: 'When you have old dirty clothes, *there is only one way* to get them clean. You take them down to the spring, fill a tub with water, put the clothes down into the water, take a paddle of lye soap and rub it in

well; take them out and rub them on a washboard until they are clean; rinse all the dirt out and then hang them on a line where the air dries them and the sun whitens them.'" Then, turning to the Methodist preacher who was seated on the platform, he said, "Now, what do you have to say against that?" The Methodist preacher replied, "Nothing. But, then I observed that after you washed the clothes clean and the air dried them and the sun whitened them, that you have to sprinkle them before you can iron them."

### The Sunday Schools

To Bishop Asbury belongs the honor of organizing the first Sunday school in America. This school was organized in 1786 in Hanover County, Virginia. It did not make much progress for some years. In the Conference of 1790 this objective was adopted: "Let persons be appointed to teach (gratis) all who will attend and have capacity to learn; from six in the morning to ten, and from two in the afternoon til six. The chief objective of the Sunday school was to give children an education and to keep them from mischief." The demands upon the teachers were so great that it soon was given up as an institution of learning. Some years later it was reorganized as an instrument of the church in evangelism to train the pupils for church membership and in religious living.

We have no record of any Sunday school in the county until 1835. To the question, What is the number of Sabbath schools and what are their conditions? In answer to this question, Joshua Lea, preacher, made this report to the third Quarterly Conference on October 10, 1835: "There are nine schools, three hundred one pupils, seventy-five teachers, seven superintendents, eight libraries with five hundred seventy-eight volumes, three Bible classes, and thirty pupils converted." In 1845, Joseph Tucker reported: "There have been no schools in operation this quarter because of the inclemency of the weather." Twenty years later, W. B. Richardson, pastor, reported in 1865: "Not much doing on account of northern soldiers roaming the country." G. C. Bynum in 1871 reported: "Pleasant Garden school pupils memorized eight hundred and twelve verses of Scirpture and Mt. Pleasant twenty-one hundred verses!" Then in September, "The Sabbath schools have been closed except Mt. Pleasant."

The Greensboro District in 1884 had seventy-nine schools, five hundred and fifty-one officers and teachers, and four thousand and sixty-nine scholars. The only station in this six-county district with

eighty-seven churches was Greensboro with two schools, thirty-seven officers and teachers, and three hundred scholars.

How small was the number of scholars in the six schools on the Pleasant Garden Circuit with only two hundred scholars, or an average of some forty-five pupils to a school! Yet, these small schools in the county were meeting in the corners of a one-room church, training their youth for Christian service and living. So many of our leaders in both church and state have come out of small churches.

### Plesant Garden Classical School

The Methodist people were always interested in education and it is not clear whether Pleasant Garden Methodist Church established and controlled a school known as the Pleasant Garden Classical School, or cooperated with the community in establishing this school. We do know that a report was made to the 4th Quarterly Conference held at Rehobeth in 1869 in which T. S. Whittington, principal of the school, was presented to the conference and his report and plans for the school were regarded as encouraging. Again, on February 7, 1874, Professor R. P. Troy, principal, made his report and it was adopted. There is in existence a grade report of Miss Annie Hardin for the quarter ending May 21, 1885, which lists among the subjects taught as Latin, Greek, English, French, and German.

This school grew in number of pupils until it expanded into a boarding school with a dormitory for girls and one for boys. This school united with the state system in 1905 and became one of the first accredited high schools in the state. The church continues its support of the public school and its many activities.

## METHODISM IN GUILFORD COUNTY

### 1890 - 1965

The Western North Carolina Conference was formed in 1890 from the North Carolina and Holston Conferences and it embraces all of the western part of the state. The first Annual Conference was held at Concord on November 26, 1890. Bishop Charles B. Galloway presided and C. G. Montgomery was elected secretary. The Conference was divided into nine districts: Asheville, Charlotte, Franklin, Mt. Airy, Salisbury, Statesville, Shelby, Greensboro, and Winston. The Greensboro District was reduced from six counties to three, namely: Guilford, Rockingham, and Randolph with four hundred twenty-eight members and a salary of $1,350.00 for the Presiding Elder.

The lay delegates to this conference from the Greensboro District were J. S. Ragsdale, C. H. Ireland, P. H. Williams, and J. E. Walker. As we examine this first report about the number of churches to a charge, membership, salary, and Sunday schools we are amazed at the growth in all these areas in the seventy-five years of church service. This first report is given here for comparisons to later years and records.

| Charge | No. Churches | No. Members | Salary Assessed | Paid | No. Sunday Schools | No. Scholars | Pastor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Greensboro: | | | | | | | |
| West Market | 1 | 428 | 1350 | 1350 | 2 | 374 | S. H. Hilliard |
| Centenary | 1 | 242 | 600 | 627 | 1 | 249 | S. Poole |
| Greensboro Ct. | 4 | 474 | 500 | 500 | 4 | 421 | J. A. Bowles |
| Reidsville Sta. | 1 | 351 | 1000 | 1000 | 3 | 245 | W. R. Ware |
| Ruffin Ct. | 5 | 611 | 700 | 642 | 5 | 222 | N. R. Richardson |
| Summerfield Ct. | 8 | 470 | 500 | 350 | 7 | 350 | J. F. Craven |
| Jamestown Ct. | 6 | 369 | 450 | 377 | 4 | 386 | J. T. Crocker |
| Pleasant Garden Ct. | 6 | 447 | 500 | 400 | 7 | 438 | M. J. Hunt |
| High Point Sta. | 1 | 255 | 700 | 700 | 1 | 150 | J. W. Jones |
| Randleman Sta. | 2 | 314 | 650 | 650 | 2 | 192 | G. W. Callahan |
| Asheboro Ct. | 9 | 664 | 700 | 672 | 8 | 717 | Parker Holmes |
| Randolph Ct. | 6 | 243 | 800 | 810 | 9 | 677 | W. M. Bagley |
| Uwharrie Ct. | 5 | 460 | 500 | 350 | 5 | 200 | R. S. Abernethy |
| Totals | 63 | 6212 | | | 65 | 4802 | |

It is impossible to make individual church comparisons for this period. Only West Market and Centenary records are available for the others were lost in the charge reports of large circuits.

This area of Piedmont North Carolina became a strong Methodist center and produced many early church leaders. In 1965 we find that the Greensboro District of 1884 has grown into the Greensboro, High Point, Thomasville, and Winston-Salem Districts. The following chart shows comparison and growth for this area:

| District | No. Charges | No. Members | No. Sunday School Scholars | Average Attendance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Greensboro | 60 | 28,918 | 23,838 | 12,734 |
| High Point | 47 | 20,836 | 18,608 | 10,451 |
| Thomasville | 49 | 20,958 | 20,015 | 11,936 |
| Winston-Salem | 58 | 25,309 | 23,447 | 12,577 |
| Total | 214 | 60,021 | 85,908 | 47,698 |

Draw a circle with a radius of twenty-five miles around Greensboro and it will include most of these districts and some area from the North Carolina Conference. On any average Sunday morning you will have some 48,000 adults, young people and children in Sunday school. Also, you will have a comparable number of people worshipping in the church services.

This period of seventy-five years has been one of expansion in every area of life. The Methodist church, with Greensboro as a center, has exerted her influence upon the total life of the county. Based on the past growth, by the year 2,000, or thirty-five years away, the church should double its membership in Guilford County. This increase will call for many new churches, if Methodism is to meet her responsibilities.

In the early 1900's, the great "industrial expansion" began in this piedmont area. Plants to manufacture cotton, furniture, and tobacco began locating in the villages and towns. Many people seeking a better way of life—often sharecroppers—began to find employment in industry and moved to town or to the industrial village. These people were church people from the rural communities and they found their place in the existing churches or in new ones established near

their work or homes. In a few years these small or new churches became stations with a well trained ministry.

This period brought a great change in the American way of life. The horse and buggy way of travel gave way to trains, autos, and jet planes. The muddy one-lane road soon became a four-lane "cement ribbon" crossing and criss-crossing the state with good secondary roads feeding into them. Electricity transformed not only industry but most of the homes. Power machines lifted the load from the worker's back in industry and eased the work of the farmer. The small cottage or house, furnished with few necessities of life are now replaced with large, adequate houses furnished with electrical appliances and comfortable furniture. All of these small one-room churches are now replaced with large brick or stone buildings with adequate facilities for worship, education, and fellowship needs of both church and community. These large circuits with ten churches and with preaching once or twice a month now are strong stations with a full-time preacher and a trained lay leadership.

The schisms which split the church in 1792 and then again in 1844 were brought together in 1939 when the Methodist Protestant Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, were united into The Methodist Church. The union of these churches eliminated much overlapping of charges and administration.

### Pleasant Garden Circuit

### 1875 - 1945

In 1875 the Pleasant Garden Circuit was formed from the Guilford Circuit and embraced all the churches in south Guilford and upper Randolph Counties. There were ten churches and a membership of six hundred and twenty-five. The Reverend M. L. Wood was Presiding Elder and Z. Rush preacher in charge. The salary for that year was $600.00 and he received $375.00.

Again, it is difficult to know which churches were on this circuit, for the Quarterly Conferences were often jointly held and the records do not designate to which circuit a church belonged. We do know that in 1879 there were nine churches with five hundred and eighty-three members and that W. H. Bobbitt was Elder and P. L. Groome, preacher. The churches were: Mt. Pleasant, Holt's Chapel, Rehobeth, Pleasant Garden, Bethlehem, Shady Grove, Bethany, Randolph, and Cumberland Chapel. The salary that year was

$400.00 with $374.00 being paid. At some time during the past forty-four years these churches appear in the minutes: Liberty, Franklinville, Old Union, Ramseur, and Randleman.

In 1919, or forty-four years later, the circuit was reduced to four churches: Rehobeth, Bethany, Bethlehem, and Pleasant Garden. These four churches had a membership of seven hundred and forty-three. The salary that year: assessed $1,250.00 and paid $1,430.00. Rev. J. H. Barnhardt, Presiding Elder and Rev. A. G. Loftin, preacher.

Again, in 1923 the Pleasant Garden Circuit was reduced to three churches: Bethlehem, Rehobeth, and Pleasant Garden. There were seven hundred and thirty-seven members and a salary of $1,500.00. Rev. W. F. Womble, Presiding Elder, and Rev. John W. Hoyle, Jr., preacher. These churches continued to grow for the next twenty years until there was a membership of one thousand six hundred sixty-four and a salary of $2,700.00.

### Pleasant Garden Station

### 1946 - 1965

Pleasant Garden Church became a station in 1946, or one hundred and sixty years after the society was organized into a church. Rev. W. A. Lambeth, Presiding Elder, and Rev. R. A. Hunter, preacher. Today the church has a membership of some six hundred and a salary of $7,200.00.

It is interesting to look back over past years and see the growth of a church. These items were gleaned from Quarterly Conference records. We find these annual reports in regard to salary as reported for Pleasant Garden: In 1843—$14.26⅔; 1844—$12.13; 1865—$25.85; 1871—$25.00; 1872—$77.55; 1874—$180.00. We have this full report for the circuit for the year 1882. There were ten churches with five hundred and forty-three members. Rev. W. H. Bobbitt, Presiding Elder, and Rev. R. M. Hoyle, preacher. Pleasant Garden's part of the annual budget as given in the report: Salary assessed, $120.00 and paid $120.37; Bishop, $2.50; Presiding Elder, $3.55. The statistical report showed there were one hundred and four white members, no Negro members. Three infants were baptized and two Sunday schools were organized. The stewards appointed were: C. W. Tucker, S. W. Taylor, R. A. Fentress, and F. McClintock. In 1846 we find that Alexander Hanner was appointed Sunday school superintendent at Pleasant Garden, and that he also was appointed steward to fill the vacancy occasioned by the removal of Jesse Schelly.

### Early Conditions in the County

The conditions in Guilford County were most severe in the late 1700's and the early 1800's. These early settlers were a hardy people of strong convictions but with little education. Books were almost unknown except the Bible and Bunyan's *Pilgrim Progress.* Many learned to read by using these as textbooks.

Many of the early houses were one-room log houses built of native pine or oak logs. These logs were hewn on two sides and notched in the corners to hold them together. The cooking was done at an open fire which seldom went out either in summer or winter. There were few necessities and no luxuries. The beds were often built upon four stakes driven into the earthen floor and supporting either a corn-shuck or straw tick mattress.

The land was cultivated with primitive tools drawn either by a mule or team. Their patches of wheat and corn were harvested by hand. The wheat and corn were ground or pounded into flour or meal. Wheat bread was a rarity and was enjoyed only on special occasions or on Sunday.

The clothes for men, women, and children were made in their homes from cotton, wool, and flax. The cotton seed had to be picked from the lint by hand which was a slow and tedious job. The task assigned to each member after supper was to pick his shoe full of cotton seed before bed time. Then the lint was carded, spun and woven, by hand, into cloth from which their garments were made. The annual visit of the cobbler was an important event in the home. He took the tanned hides of cattle which the farmer had prepared and made shoes for each member of the family.

The period of the Revolutionary War was very distressing for the county. The quota of soldiers had to be met on each call. The Battle of Guilford Courthouse was fought on March 15, 1781, and the soldiers of both armies foraged off the land. They took what little food they could find and left the people hungry and impoverished.

The Methodist societies fared hard during this period. John Wesley wrote and distributed a pamphlet in the Colonies urging them to remain loyal to the Crown. Some of the English preachers returned home, others remained, and all were suspected. They tried to hold services where possible. The minds of the people were not on religion but on the war. Their conversations were about the men from the community who were at the front and how the war was progressing.

The economy of the period was terrible. Men worked for ten cents a day or for one penny an hour. Money was almost non-existent. Neighbors helped each other to raise houses and barns and to clear new grounds. These occasions became happy social occasions as the host prepared food and drinks for the group, and most always when night came there was a square dance to close the day's work. The nearest store to this area was Fayetteville. The men of the community formed caravans of wagons and took cured meat and grain, cotton, tobacco and corn and bartered them for salt, soda, salt fish, pins and needles and green coffee. These were times for trying men, but strong people always overcome their adversities. These people laid new foundations and worked for a better way of life. The churches helped keep alive the faith in God and from this a new economy arose, which has blessed this area.

**Pleasant Garden**

Pleasant Garden was an early settlement at the cross-roads of the Wagon Road and the Salem-Fayetteville Road. Travelers came from the north almost daily bringing news about events and national movements. The Scotch-Irish and German settlers brought news about a new religious movement that was growing fast in Pennsylvania and Maryland. Some of these traveling preachers came as early as 1776 and they were known as the "followers of Wesley." They preached at cross-roads, in courthouses and in the homes of people who invited them to hold services. Their message was Christ-centered and personal and it created much talk and even criticism and opposition because they departed from the customs of established churches. Some of these who settled in Pleasant Garden had come in contact with Bishop Francis Asbury in Maryland before coming to this community. These itinerant preachers organized the new converts and followers into class meetings under the lay class leader who was appointed by the preacher in charge.

Some of the early family histories indicate that George Kirkman and some members of his family joined with their neighbors, the Sullivans, Sherwoods, and others in organizing a Methodist Episcopal Church in 1786.

On April 20, 1792, William Shannon sold one acre of land to the Methodist Episcopal Church for twenty shillings (less than $5.00). The trustees were William Weatherly, John Coe, Daniel Sherwood, George Kirkman, and Daniel Sullivan. The pastors that year were: James Nelly, William Bellamy, and Enoch George. The first named

preacher was preacher in charge, the second was assistant, usually a deacon, and the last man was considered a learner.

According to old records, "the first church was built in 1792 and was a frame house 24 x 30 feet. As to the graveyard, it was probably commenced about the year 1800. The church stood about the middle of the present cemetery. A frame building at that time was any log building erected by hewn 8 x 8-inch upright beams mortised unto a sill and plate and fastened with wooden pegs. This made several panels in the wall which were filled with hewn logs wedged and pinned into this frame. The windows were closed by board shutters that could be opened and closed. There was no plan for heating these early buildings and in the winter months they were cold. Wooden benches made by hewing flat the top side of logs stood upon the earth floor. This church served these first members for some fifty years. It would be most interesting to know of their sacrifices and consecrated living, but their deeds do follow them and we are blessed today because they lived.

The second church, according to Duke University Library, was built in 1840. "The house was 30 x 40 feet with a 10-foot pitch. It was weatherboarded, ceiled, seated, with pulpit and stove." This church stood in what is now called the new cemetery which is near the gymnasium. This description of the building is most interesting. Few buildings at that time were weatherboarded and sealed for this was all hand-work. A stove for heating was a luxury and to have pews with backs made this one of the finest churches in Methodism. This church was typical of that generation: two front doors with two aisles and the men seated on the right and the women on the left. These churches all had balconies for the Negro members who sat in them and largely looked on the congregation seated below. This church building served the congregation during the trying days of the Civil War and the period of destruction which followed. Many families were torn by separation, fathers and brothers in the war, and a concern for these families who were in the battle area. There is no record of the building committee or of the trustees. The small Sunday school classes met in the corners of the church and out of these classes have come many of our leaders.

The church purchased more land as it looked toward the future expansion. On August 7, 1845, a deed was made to the trustees from Watts A. Winbourne and Jonny Sloan for a small tract of land for the consideration of $1.00. The trustees were Levin Kirkman, Eben

W. Hendrick, Fisher B. Layton, Wm. Young, Abdolem Hanner, Hiram Yates, and John Percham.

Again on August 29, 1888, W. D. Ross and wife Elizabeth deeded to the church one acre of land valued at $50.00. This is where the present church now stands. The trustees were W. N. Young, S. D. Elliott, W. G. Tucker, Alfonso Elliott, James M. Ward, and J. K. Tucker.

Then on November 10, 1906, D. G. Neelley deeded a tract of land to the church for the consideration of $1.00. The trustees were Henry T. Kirkman, R. F. Fentress, W. A. Elliott, O. F. Ross, John R. Tucker, W. C. Tucker, and J. W. Weatherly.

The third church building was begun in 1888 and completed in 1890. It was located across the road from the other property. This was a one-room brick building 40 x 85 feet and was among the first brick Methodist churches in the country and was considered one of the best in the conference. The building committee was composed of Madison Tucker, William Tucker, and Horace Wolfe. The Reverend Moses J. Hunt was the pastor during the construction. The building was dedicated in November 1891. It was in the traditional style of that period, two front doors in the front, two aisles which separated the men and women in the congregation, with the pulpit built into the front as the congregation faced the minister. These brick were hand-made and the brick kilns were nearby. As usual much of the material and labor were donated by the members and friends of the church. This building was incorporated into a later program of expansion, but the main body of the sanctuary remains today.

The membership of the church was steadily increasing and the need for graded classes had become pressing, so again it became necessary to enlarge the church plant. The congregation in 1921 appointed a building committee under the leadership of Rev. A. G. Loftin composed of C. F. Weatherly, W. B. Hunt, C. F. Neelley, H. (Herb) Vickrey, Charles W. Kirkman, C. F. Kirkman, and H. L. Coble to study the needs of the church and Sunday school and to submit plans for the enlargement of the church plant. Plans were submitted to the congregation and they were adopted and work soon began on the building. The church was rebuilt with brick with a new front entrance and two towers, the sanctuary capacity was doubled by the addition of rooms on either side, a new educational building was constructed in the rear, which provided thirteen classrooms, and a dining room and kitchen. This expansion program was

made possible by gifts of money, work, and materials. It was dedicated on June 21, 1931. Again Pleasant Garden Church took its place among the progressive rural churches of the conference and was among the first to provide classrooms for graded study.

The need for more classrooms again became acute and the church in 1950 began to make plans for a separate educational building. Plans were drawn and approved by the congregation and a financial policy of "pay-as-you-go" was adopted. A building committee was elected on July 15, 1952: Charles Riley, Chairman; Don W. Vaughan, Robert Ayers, Lynn Hunt, and R. D. Teachey. Mrs. John Kirkman was elected treasurer of the building fund. This building of brick and concrete was begun in 1952 under the leadership of Rev. R. P. Waugh and completed and dedicated in 1955 under the pastorate of Rev. C. O. Kennerly. This building provides a large fellowship hall with kitchen, a pastor's study, and nursery on the main floor; the second floor provides space for the youth of the church. This building meets not only the needs of the church, but povides space for the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, women's meetings, Lions Club and many community and social functions. The building has an estimated value of $28,000.00.

Again, after some forty years, the church began a study of the present and future needs of the church and to begin to make plans for accomplishing it. A Finance Committee composed of Mrs. Max Tucker, Chairman; C. O. Kennerly, Mrs. C. W. Quate, Carl Beroth, Wayne Davis, Frank Plunkett, and Verne Walton was elected. Miss Dorothy Lednum was elected treasurer. This committee, with the approval of the Official Board, secured the Reverend R. P. Gibbs, Conference Field Service and Finance, to organize and direct a financial campaign for the church. After thorough preparation, the campaign for cash and pledges over a three-year period was made and some $83,000.00 was secured. The committee thought this was a satisfying report.

A Building Committee composed of Wesley Jones, Chairman; J. Leroy Dawson, Charles Riley, James O. Vickrey, Phil Pearce, C. W. Hockett, Jr., Starr Layton, Lester Jones, and Leon Watson was elected. This committee made preliminary surveys of needs and its report was adopted by the Official Board. In 1965, Rev. E. H. Lowman was appointed pastor, replacing Rev. Paul Bruton. A more detailed study of the needs for both sanctuary and education was made under the direction of Mr. Vernon E. Lewis, who was employed as architect. A master plan was adopted and an estimate of $315,000.00 for

the completed building was received. Since the plan is so drawn that it can be constructed in units, the committee after study recommended that the sanctuary and education unit be constructed at this time at a cost of some $215,000.00. It is planned for construction to begin this summer.

The church is making plans for observing its 175th anniversary this year. A committee composed of Rev. C. O. Kennerly, Chairman; Mrs. W. B. Kirkman, Charles J. Hunt, Miss Ruth Weatherly, Miss Ethel Neelley, Wayne Davis, Mrs. J. S. Parsons, and Miss Barbara Ross, is working on these plans.

This scheduled program has been approved by the Anniversary Committee and the Official Board:

The pageant will be presented at the Community Center in September.

The Annual Homecoming on August 6th with Bishop Earl Hunt, Jr. preaching the sermon.

## BISHOP ASBURY VISITS PLEASANT GARDEN

Of the many distinguished people who have visited in Pleasant Garden, no one is more honored that the Bishop Asbury. He is regarded as the Father of Methodism in America. His influence is felt all the way from New York to Georgia. For forty-five years he lived the life of an itinerant preacher without a home, and spending only a few days at any place with friends.

He was on a journey from the east toward the west in 1798. We learn from his Journal that he was at Shallotte on November 10. He writes, "The weather was so cold and the house so open, that I was chilled through my whole system." He continued his journey and on November 15, 1798, arrived in Pleasant Garden. He records, "We rode from the upper branches of Rocky River, twenty miles, to Pleasant Garden. When I came to the meeting house, I had little strength of mind or body. We lodged at Daniel Sherwood's. My aged brethren and sisters from Maryland and Delaware rejoiced to see me, a poor, feeble man. They had seen me in better times." The next day he continued his journey toward South Carolina.

Again, some sixteen months later while he was on a trip from the south toward the north, he was snowbound in Anson County by snow closing the road across the Uwharrie Mountains. He changed his course and came north around the mountains, crossing the Yadkin River higher up, and on Thursday, February 27, 1800, came to Pleasant Garden. He writes, "We came to Daniel Sherwood's in Guilford County. It rained and snowed on Friday. I gave an exhortation, and ordained two deacons. We got our horses shod and then rode on toward the coast."

Some people live in history because of some deed done or by an association with some great person. Daniel Sherwood lives in history because of his association with Methodism and Bishop Asbury. We do know that he was a charter member of the church and was one of the first trustees. According to county records, he owned some 300 acres of land about Pleasant Garden Church which, according to line boundaries, was the late W. D. Hardin land and later known as the Miss Annie Hardin place. It is now owned by Boren Brick Company. The original house stood about where the entrance to the brick yard turns off the Hunt Road. We hope to erect a historic marker there to Bishop Asbury in memory of his visits to Pleasant Garden.

## PLEASANT GARDEN'S PARSONAGES

The first parsonage was on one acre of land and stood where the present Baptist church was built. The land was given by Col. D. G. Neelley to the trustees of the Pleasant Garden Circuit in 1877. The circuit trustees were: J. M. Ward, President; R. M. Gretter, C. M. Tucker, Treasurer; W. G. Tucker, George W. Ross, W. A. Short, and A. D. Ross. According to a record in Duke Library, "The house was a four-room cottage with stable and shelters, a well of water, all under good fence. It was partly furnished and valued at $750.00. This house was built in 1877 and was first occupied by Rev. J. R. Scroggs." This parsonage served the circuit for forty-eight years and was then sold in 1915 for division.

The second parsonage was on N. Main Street and was purchased in 1915. It was a two-story frame building with eight rooms and fairly well furnished. This parsonage and its contents were totally destroyed by fire on November 10, 1940.

After the fire, the church bought a house on North Main Street for a parsonage. It was a brick house with adequate rooms for the preacher and his family.

In 1944 the church traded this property to C. Gray for a lot and house adjoining the church property on the north, to be used for the parsonage. This was a large two-story frame building with nine rooms which was used for a parsonage until 1961.

The present eight-room brick parsonage was built in 1961 south of the church on Church Street. It is well adapted for the use of the minister and his family and it is furnished with good furniture. The estimated value of the building and contents is $30,000.00. The Building Committee was James O. Vickrey, Chairman; Carl T. Beroth, Lester Jones, Charles G. Riley, and Mrs. Max Tucker.

## THE CIRCUIT-RIDER

It was my first purpose to write a thumb-nail sketch of all these early itinerant preachers, but then I found that about half of them were only a name and served only one year on the Guilford Circuit; some others served for only two years and then quit; but some gave all of their life to this ministry. So I decided to take only a few and from them try to get a picture of the Circuit Rider.

Let our mind go back for a hundred and seventy-five years and see the familiar figure of the Methodist preacher as he makes the

monthly rounds of his large circuit. Look at the grave, earnest countenance, the straight-breasted coat, oil-skin covering for the hat, the leather saddlebags containing all his earthly belongings, and the steady gait of the horse, which was the mark of the itinerant preacher. He preached with an oratory that was peculiar to the Wesleyan movement. They had a message from God, and realized the "woe" that was pronounced upon them if they did not deliver it. Hence they preached with a great earnestness and with a zeal that was new to the people of America.

These Circuit Riders had little time for reading or meditation except what they did on horseback, as they traveled circuits and stayed in crowded cabins. So they read the Bible and the books available to them as they traveled the roads. Most of these men were well educated for that period, having studied under private teachers or ministers. They were acquainted not only with the classics but the sciences of that generation.

Bishop Asbury's Journal reveals more about the toils, hardships, and difficulties endured by the sturdy Circuit Rider than any other record. In speaking about his Journal, he makes this comment and prophecy: "I have well considered my Journal; it is inelegant, yet it conveys much information of the state of religion and the country. I make no doubt the Methodist are, and will be, a numerous and wealthy people, and their preachers who follow us will not know our struggles."

### Their Trials and Tribulations

The preachers frequently suffered through want of clothes. James Jenkins records, "While preaching in the Cape Fear section, the homespun coat, which my mother gave me, wore out so much that I lost one sleeve from the elbow down; but rather than lose time to go and obtain a new one, I went on round the circuit sleeveless in one arm, until a brother exchanged with me, giving me the best of the bargain."

These Circuit Riders were often forced to "subsist solely on cucumbers or a piece of cold bread, without the luxury of milk or coffee." In many parts of the state where they were entertained, the common diet was fried bacon and cornbread. The houses were rude, one-room log cabins with earthen floors. The beds upon which Bishop Asbury and his journeymen often slept were constructed of "clapboards" laid on poles supported by rude forks driven into the ground.

It is rather unusual that a church one hundred seventy-five years old never produced a minister. In the early 1800's she produced a Methodist minister's wife, Mary (Polly) Hendrix. She was married to the Reverend Ebenezer W. Ward and she lived until 1893, being over ninety-three years old. She has left many interesting stories about preacher life in those days. She tells about attending an Annual Conference and being asked to remove a gold pin from her dress before entering as the early church believed in applying literally the rule against "putting on gold and costly apparel." Mr. Ward was appointed to the Pleasant Garden Circuit in 1828. While making the first round with his wife, they came to a fork in the road and while debtaing which fork to take, they heard a rooster crow in the distance. He remarked to his wife that, "Where there is a rooster you will find people." Taking that direction, they soon came to a house and found a glad welcome. Mr. Ward was noted for his hard preaching against the sins of his day. He insisted that the members of the Methodist church keep the rule of "doing no harm; doing all the good you can; and attending upon the means of grace." These two faithful servants are buried in the Pleasant Garden Cemetery.

The Reverend Enoch George who was on the Guilford Circuit in 1792, the year the church was built, tells of his many experiences while on the Lincoln Circuit in 1790 and 1791. The charge was described as all the territory west of the Catawba River, thus it was almost boundless. He writes of that period, that he "was a beardless youth assigned to this vast area which was no easy place. He had been sent to a people confirmed in the principles of Calvinism, the very hardest cases in the whole catalog of sinners!" He was far away from home and homesick, he had no money and his clothes were worn out. He had to preach for nothing for no one ever thought about giving him anything. He had become discouraged and thought of quitting. Then he received a letter from Bishop Asbury saying, "It is good for him and others to bear the yoke in their youth; that itinerant labors must be hard if properly performed; that it is better to become inured to poverty and pain, hunger and cold in the days of youth, than when he is old and gray-headed." This advice was well received and it gave him a new courage to continue on this rough circuit and then on to a useful ministry in the midst of hard rides and poor fares.

One of the most colorful preachers of the early 1800's was Jesse Lee. He was born in Virginia in 1758, and early embraced Methodism under the ministry of William Glendenning. His pastor appoint-

ed him class leader while a very young man. He was drafted into the militia in 1780 but after a few days he was transferred to the baggage and supplies department as a wagon-driver. After receiving his discharge from the army at the close of the war, he committed himself and his life to the work of the itinerant ministry. He was preacher on the Guilford Circuit for the year 1824.

While serving churches in the Yadkin River Valley, he had several experiences. After traveling all day, he came late in the evening to a house and asked if he could tarry with him that night. To which the man of the house replied, "If you choose to get down, I will not turn thee away." He found that this Quaker was not lacking in hospitality and though his speech was unusual, he soon found rest for his weary body.

His library, itinerant like himself, embraced a Bible, hymn book, and a Discipline. In common with the itinerants, he wore a straight-breasted coat, and a white cravat without collar; his face was smooth-shaven, and his hat had an ample brim; and he traveled on horseback. While serving in this area of the Yadkin, he picked up a little coloquial Dutch (German) and when his scholarship was tested by the parsons and schoolmasters, who were full of Greek and Latin, he addressed them in an unknown tongue, thus paying them off in their coin.

He was a person of magnificent presence and above the ordinary size, and he had the manners of a Christian gentleman. He could sing the Methodist hymns in such a style that left little use for a church bell to call his congregation together for worship.

Extemporaneous preaching, like everything that pertained to the Methodist, was misunderstood. It was represented as preaching without preparation. It pleased the people but the novelty was a stumbling-block to the clergy. He records this story of an established clergyman who granted him permission to preach in his church on the condition that he select the text and present it to him after he had entered the pulpit. A great crowd was present to see the discomfort of the newcomer. The text selected was Numbers 22:21, "And Balaam rose up in the morning and saddled his ass." Knowing the biblical background, the exposition was of course biblical. But the application was unexpected, especially when he represented the minister as Balaam who was saddling his people with many galling practices and demands. After this, his skill as an extemporaneous preacher was established.

In 1800 Bishop Asbury chose Jesse Lee as his assistant and they traveled together from Savannah to St. Mary's, a ride of about four hundred miles. At the General Conference in 1800 when the vote to elect a bishop was counted, he lost by four votes to Richard Whatcoat.

We find him on the Guilford Circuit in 1824, a man of sixty-six years old. He was the only preacher on the circuit that year, which included Guilford and parts of Rockingham and Randolph Counties. His hand helped guide the young struggling church by laying foundations which have made her great. His name soon disappears from the list of active ministers and even his grave is unknown today.

Bishop Francis Asbury was not only a leader in pioneer life but was foremost in braving hardship, toil, and peril. Once, while crossing the Alleghany Mountains, writes, "We came to an old forsaken habitation. Our horses grazed about while we broiled our meat. Midnight brought us up at Jones' after riding some fifty miles. The old man, our host, was kind enough to wake us up at four o'clock in the morning. We journeyed on lonely wilds, where no food might be found, except what grew in the woods or was carried by us."

On other occasions, "I have slept in the woods without necessary food or raiment. I have waded swamps and led my horse for miles, where I took colds which brought on disease." Again, "I had nothing to subsist upon but roots, young grapevines, and sweet cane, and such like produce of the woods." On another occasion, "I accidentally came upon a bear eating a deer, and drew near in hopes of getting some, but he growled and looked angry, so I left and quickly passed on." Often, "At night when I lay down to rest, I never slept, but dreamed of eating." Again he writes, "We have ridden three hundred miles in about nine days, and our horse's backs are bruised with their loads." Then the heroic Asbury cries out and says, "I want more faith, patience, and resignation to do the will of God in all things."

The whole church was saddened with the death of its leader on March 31, 1816, in Virginia. Dr. Bangs estimated that Bishop Francis Asbury ~~during~~ during the forty-five years of his ministry in America, delivered not less than sixteen thousand four hundred and twenty-five (16,425) sermons, besides lectures and exhortations; that he traveled during this same time about two hundred and seventy thousand (270,000) miles for the most part on the worst roads and much of it on horseback; that he presided over two hundred twenty-four (224) Annual Conferences, and ordained more than

four thousand ministers. He found five hundred Methodists in widely-scattered areas when he began his labors; at his death he left a flourishing church in all parts of the country with more than two hundred and eleven thousand (211,000) communicants served by seven hundred traveling and three thousand local preachers.

From these incidents and experiences we get an image of what the Circuit Rider was like in appearance, and his ability to overcome physical trials. He was God's Ambassador with an urgent message from his King to sinful people who were living in sin, to return to Him and live. He regarded this message as so urgent that he climbed wild mountains, crossed treacherous swamps, and braved snow, cold, and hunger to deliver his message.

We who live in Pleasant Garden owe a great debt to these men who came for one hundred and ninety years preaching their message and establishing a church. Some only labored one year, while others more, but each in his own way made his contribution in service and dedication to God.

The author of "The Son of God Goes Forth" catches the spirit of the Circuit Rider when we hear Reginal Heber proclaim:

The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain:
His blood-red banner streams from afar:
Who follows in His train?
Who best can drink his cup of woe,
Triumphant over pain,
Who patient bears his cross below,
He follows in His train.

God grant me strength to follow in their train.

## THE CHRONOLOGICAL ROLL

### THE CAROLINA CIRCUIT

| Year | Presiding Elder | Minister |
|---|---|---|
| 1776 | | Francis Poythress, Edward Dromgoole, Isham Tatum |

### THE NORTH CAROLINA CIRCUIT

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1777 | | John King, John Dickens, Lee Roy Cole, Edward Pride |

### THE NEW HOPE CIRCUIT

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1778 | | William Glendenning, Andrew Yeagan, Philip Bruce |
| 1779 | | James O'Kelly, Philip Adams |
| 1780 | | Francis Poythress, John Major |
| 1781 | | Philip Bruce |
| 1782 | | James White |

### THE GUILFORD CIRCUIT

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1783 | | Samuel Dudley, James Gibbons |
| 1784 | | Thomas Humphries, Thomas Anderson |
| 1785 | James O'Kelly | John Smith, Stephen Johnson, Thomas Humphries |
| 1786 | James O'Kelly | John Baldwin |
| 1787 | Francis Poythress | John Bardwell, Jeremiah Minter |
| 1788 | John Tunnell | Jeremiah Abel, James Conner |
| 1789 | Edward Morrison | Isaac Lowe, Benjamin Carter |
| 1790 | Thomas Anderson | Lemuel Moore, George McKenney |
| 1791 | Isaac Lowe | Jonathan Bird, Ezekiel Humphrey |
| 1792 | Isaac Lowe | James Nelly, William Bellamy, Enoch George |
| 1793 | Isaac Lowe | John Pace, Absalom Kinsey |
| 1794 | Isaac Lowe | John Bonner, Benjamin Denton, Philip Sands |
| 1795 | James Meacham | Daniel Deane, William Wilkinson |
| 1796 | Josiah Asken | John Jones |
| 1797 | Henry Hill | William Burke, William Hill, Roger Hancock |
| 1798 | Lawrence Mansfield | Samuel S. Steward, Cornelius Hill |
| 1799 | James Rogers | Roger Wilkinson, George M'Kinney |
| 1800 | Francis Poythress | William Atwood, Jesse Cole |
| 1801 | James P. Eller | Josiah Philips |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1802 | James Douthet | John Moore |
| 1803 | Philip Bruce | Thomas Douglas, John C. Bellew |
| 1804 | Alexander M'Caine | William Hubbard, George Dillard |
| 1805 | Thomas Mann | John Cox, Nathan Weedon |
| 1806 | John Baxter | John Gibbons, Richard Owen |
| 1807 | Thomas Douglas | William Barnes, Charles Roundtree |
| 1808 | Thomas Douglas | Edmund Henley, Thomas J. Crockwell |
| 1809 | Samuel Garrard | Charles Roundtree, John Humphries |
| 1810 | Samuel Garrard | Joel Arrington |
| 1811 | Samuel Garrard | Edward Cannon, Erastmus Stimson |
| 1812 | William Jean | Ethelburt Drake |
| 1813 | William Jean | Joel Arrington, John Doyle |
| 1814 | Edward Cannon | Joel Arrington, Cyrus Christian |
| 1815 | Edward Cannon | Henry Robertson, Charles Mosely |
| 1816 | Edward Cannon | James Hanner, Abram Trail |
| 1817 | Edward Cannon | Samuel Garrard, James Smith |
| 1818 | James Patterson | John F. Wright, Archibald Robinson |
| 1819 | James Patterson | Samuel Hunter |
| 1820 | James Patterson | Thomas Howard |
| 1821 | James Patterson | James Reid |
| 1822 | Lewis Skidmore | James Reid |
| 1823 | Lewis Skidmore | Thacker Muire |
| 1824 | Lewis Skidmore | Jesse Lee |
| 1825 | Lewis Skidmore | Rufus Wiley |
| 1826 | Peter Doub | Thomas Mann, Jacob Hitt |
| 1827 | Peter Doub | Rufus Wiley, Thomas Mann |
| 1828 | Peter Doub | William N. Abington, Eli Ward |
| 1829 | Peter Doub | Richard D. Merriweather, Joshua Jolliff |
| 1830 | Moses Brock | Peter Doub |
| 1831 | Moses Brock | John H. Watson |
| 1832 | Moses Brock | Joshua Bethel |
| 1833 | John Wesley Childs | Joshua Bethel |
| 1834 | John Wesley Childs | James Morrison |
| 1835 | Abraham Penn | Joshua Lea |

## THE NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1836 | Abraham Penn | David B. Nicholson |
| 1837 | Moses Brock | T. Barnum |
| 1838 | Moses Brock | Lindsay D. Bumpass |
| 1839 | Moses Brock | Alfred Norman |
| 1840 | Moses Brock | William Anderson |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1841 | Moses Brock | John St. Clare |
| 1842 | Samuel S. Bryant | James D. Lumsden |
| 1843 | Samuel S. Bryant | James D. Lumsden |
| 1844 | Samuel S. Bryant | A. Lea |
| 1845 | Joseph A. Goodman | Joseph Tucker |
| 1846 | Joseph A. Goodman | William S. Colson |
| 1847 | Peter Doub | Joseph B. Martin |
| 1848 | J. A. Cunningham | John Tillett |
| 1849 | S. D. Bumpass | Joseph B. Martin |
| 1850 | William Carter | John Rich |
| 1851 | James Jameson | W. W. Nesbit |
| 1852 | W. W. Barringer | Charles Phillips |
| 1853 | W. W. Barringer | Charles Phillips |
| 1854 | W. E. Barringer | Soloman W. Helsebeck, Joseph Bethel |
| 1855 | N. H. D. Wilson | J. Bethel |
| 1856 | N. H. D. Wilson | John M. Gunn |
| 1857 | N. H. D. Wilson | John M. Gunn |
| 1858 | N. H. D. Wilson | M. J. Hunt |
| 1859 | Numa Reid | J. B. Alford |
| 1860 | Numa Reid | R. S. Webb |
| 1861 | Numa Reid | R. S. Webb |

THE SOUTH GUILFORD CIRCUIT

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1862 | Numa Reid | Z. Rush |
| 1863 | Peter Doub | Z. Rush |
| 1864 | Peter Doub | W. B. Richardson |
| 1865 | Peter Doub | W. B. Richardson |
| 1866 | N. H. Reid | J. W. Lewis |
| 1867 | N. H. Reid | W. B. Richardson |
| 1868 | W. H. Bobbitte | Charles H. Phillips |
| 1869 | W. H. Bobbitte | Charles H. Phillips, N. H. D. Richardson |
| 1870 | W. Barringer | C. W. King |
| 1871 | W. Barringer | G. C. Bynum |
| 1872 | W. Barringer | Z. Rush |
| 1873 | Charles H. Phillips | N. H. D. Wilson |
| 1874 | N. H. D. Wilson | Z. Rush |

THE PLEASANT GARDEN CIRCUIT

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1875 | N. H. D. Wilson | Z. Rush |
| 1876 | M. L. Wood | Z. Rush |
| 1877 | M. L. Wood | J. R. Scroggs |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1878 | M. L. Wood | J. R. Scroggs |
| 1879 | W. B. Bobbitt | P. L. Groom |
| 1880 | W. B. Bobbitt | P. L. Groom |
| 1881 | W. B. Bobbitt | J. B. Carpenter |
| 1882 | W. B. Bobbitt | R. M. Hoyle |
| 1883 | R. C. Burton | L. L. Johnson |
| 1884 | J. A. Cunningham | John Tillett, C. W. King |
| 1885 | J. A. Cunningham | John Tillett |
| 1886 | J. A. Cunningham | M. M. McFarland |
| 1887 | J. A. Cunningham | M. C. Fields |
| 1888 | S. D. Adams | M. C. Fields |
| 1889 | S. D. Adams | M. J. Hunt |

THE WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1890 | J. R. Brooks | M. J. Hunt |
| 1891 | J. R. Brooks | T. W. S. Parker |
| 1892 | J. R. Brooks | J. B. Tabor |
| 1893 | J. H. Weaver | J. B. Tabor |
| 1894 | P. J. Carraway | S. T. Barber |
| 1895 | P. J. Carraway | S. T. Barber |
| 1896 | P. J. Carraway | S. T. Barber |
| 1897 | P. J. Carraway | S. T. Barber |
| 1898 | Frank H. Wood | R. F. Bryant, J. F. Craven |
| 1899 | Frank H. Wood | R. F. Bryant |
| 1900 | J. R. Scroggs | T. W. S. Parker, E. J. Poe |
| 1901 | J. R. Scroggs | W. L. LeGette, E. J. Poe |
| 1902 | J. R. Scroggs | T. B. Johnson |
| 1903 | J. R. Scroggs | T. B. Johnson |
| 1904 | J. R. Scroggs | T. B. Johnson, J. T. Stover |
| 1905 | S. B. Turrentine | J. T. Stover |
| 1906 | S. B. Turrentine | E. G. Kilgore (Supply) |
| 1907 | S. B. Turrentine | E. G. Kilgore |
| 1908 | W. R. Ware | R. A. Taylor |
| 1909 | W. R. Ware | R. A. Taylor |
| 1910 | W. R. Ware | J. A. Sharpe |
| 1911 | W. R. Ware | J. A. Sharpe |
| 1912 | G. T. Rowe | J. A. Sharpe |
| 1913 | G. T. Rowe | P. L. Terrell |
| 1914 | J. H. Weaver | P. L. Terrell |
| 1915 | J. H. Weaver | C. F. Sherrill |
| 1916 | J. H. Weaver | C. F. Sherrill |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1917 | J. H. Barnhardt | C. F. Sherrill |
| 1918 | J. H. Barnhardt | C. F. Sherrill |
| 1919 | J. H. Barnhardt | A. G. Loftin |
| 1920 | A. W. Plyler | A. G. Loftin |
| 1921 | W. F. Womble | A. G. Loftin |
| 1922 | W. F. Womble | A. G. Loftin |
| 1923 | W. F. Womble | J. W. Hoyle, Jr. |
| 1924 | W. F. Womble | J. W. Hoyle, Jr. |
| 1925 | J. B. Craven | A. R. Bell |
| 1926 | J. B. Craven | A. R. Bell |
| 1927 | J. B. Craven | J. E. Womack |
| 1928 | J. B. Craven | J. T. Ratledge |
| 1929 | W. A. Newell | J. T. Ratledge |
| 1930 | W. A. Newell | G. W. Williams |
| 1931 | W. A. Newell | G. W. Williams |
| 1932 | W. A. Newell | R. C. Kirk |
| 1933 | L. D. Thompson | R. C. Kirk |
| 1934 | L. D. Thompson | R. C. Kirk |
| 1935 | C. C. Weaver | R. C. Kirk |
| 1936 | W. W. Peele | R. C. Kirk |
| 1937 | W. W. Peele | E. E. Snow |
| 1938 | L. B. Hayes | E. E. Snow |
| 1939 | L. B. Hayes | E. E. Snow |
| 1940 | L. B. Hayes | T. F. Higgins |
| 1941 | L. B. Hayes | T. F. Higgins |
| 1942 | L. B. Hayes | T. F. Higgins |
| 1943 | L. B. Hayes | T. F. Higgins |
| 1944 | W. A. Lambeth | R. A. Hunter |
| 1945 | W. A. Lambeth | R. A. Hunter |

PLEASANT GARDEN STATION

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1946 | W. A. Lambeth | R. A. Hunter |
| 1947 | W. A. Lambeth | R. A. Hunter |
| 1948 | W. A. Lambeth | R. A. Hunter |
| 1949 | H. F. Duncan | R. P. Waugh |
| 1950 | H. F. Duncan | R. P. Waugh |
| 1951 | H. F. Duncan | R. P. Waugh |
| 1952 | H. F. Duncan | R. P. Waugh |
| 1953 | H. F. Duncan | C. O. Kennerly |
| 1954 | H. F. Duncan | C. O. Kennerly |
| 1955 | E. C. Few | C. O. Kennerly |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1956 | E. C. Few | C. O. Kennerly |
| 1957 | J. Clay Madison | P. F. Snider |
| 1958 | J. Clay Madison | P. F. Snider |
| 1959 | J. Clay Madison | P. A. Bruton |
| 1960 | J. Clay Madison | P. A. Bruton |
| 1961 | J. Clay Madison | P. A. Bruton |
| 1962 | J. Clay Madison | P. A. Bruton |
| 1963 | J. G. Winkler | P. A. Bruton |
| 1964 | J. G. Winkler | P. A. Bruton |
| 1965 | J. G. Winkler | E. H. Lowman |
| 1966 | J. G. Winkler | E. H. Lowman |

## SOME AUTHORS CONSULTED

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